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SYNOPSIS OF A PAPER UPON "A SUMMER'S EXPLORATION IN THE SIERRA NEVADA."

BY A. R. CONKLING.

Our outfitting point was Carson City, Nevada. During the fortnight spent here in preparation, a series of meteorological observations were taken night and day. There is little else besides the Carson mint in the State capital to interest the stranger. We started out for Glenbrook, on Lake Tahoe, on September 15. But Lieutenant Wheeler was not the first comer to this region. In 1843, Fremont explored here, and left a cannon on the grounds, now owned by Captain Bray. In 1852, McComb surveyed an emigrant road at the foot of the lake. Later still, in 1862, Lieutenant Beckwirth reconnoitered portions of the Sierra Nevada, and in 1874 a coast-survey party did some work. But the first systematic survey of Lake Tahoe and vicinity was begun last year by our party. Flags were put up on prominent points on the lake-shore to be used in the triangulation. Leaving Glenbrook, the party traveled south to Lake Valley, California. At Kearney's, on the boundary of the "Gold" and "Silver" states, it was found that the dividing line ran through the middle of the dining room in the hotel; hence, whoever dines there, may eat in California and Nevada at the same time, by sitting at the middle of the table. The lofty mountains known as Job's Peaks were ascended from Rowland's. The view from the summit is very extensive. The Inyo mountains are seen in the far south, while on the north and west the Sierra Nevada range is visible for more than fifty miles. The lumber trade of this part of California deserves a passing notice. On account of the nearness of the Comstock mines, where vast quantities of timber are constantly required, the dealers find them a good market for their lumber. One operator named Gardner has a contract for sixty millions of logs for the mines. He has four years to fill it, and has built a railroad extending three miles back from Lake Tahoe, in order to haul his logs to the water. After the logs are brought to the water they are enclosed in a triangular boom, and towed across the lake to Glenbrook, where three saw-mills are kept running night and day. About 60,000 feet of lumber are sawed daily at this place. The lumber having been cut into the required form, is then transported to Carson City, either by wagons or in a flume, whence it is taken to Virginia City.

Leaving Lake Valley, our party crossed the western summit, taking the Placerville road. The scenery along this route is unsurpassed. In the American Fork cañon the walls rise over 700 feet, and are almost bare of vegetation. Before the completion of the Pacific railroad this road was the direct highway to the silver mines of Nevada. The travel was so large that \$20,000 was received at the toll-houses in a single season. Now this thoroughfare is seldom used save by the Californian fruit venders. It was over this same route that Mr. Greeley took his well-known ride of 109 miles in ten hours with the celebrated driver Hank Monk. Going northward, the highest points in the range were climbed, the principal of which are Pyramid Peak, Tallac Peak, and Twin Peaks. The view from Tallac Peak is one of the finest in America, rivaling even the scene from the summits of the Faulhorn and Rigi in Switzerland; at least twenty lakes are visible, their mirror-like surfaces glistening in the sunlit sky, and forming a pleasant contrast to the somber hues of the densely wooded ridges. On a clear day Monte Diablo can be seen from Pyramid Peak, 150

miles distant. The rest of the season was spent in surveying the borders of Lake Tahoe. This lake is remarkable for its great depth, 1,645 feet being the deepest sounding taken. Lago Maggiore and Lago di Como are the only lakes in Europe deeper than Tahoe. These lakes are respectively 2,800 and 1,980 feet deep, but their elevation is much lower than Tahoe, which lies at the great height of 6,220 feet, or about the same as the top of Mount Washington. A zone of emerald-green water extends along the shore of this lake. The deep water has an exquisite ultramarine-blue color, and the transparency of it is wonderful. A white object can be seen at the depth of 115 feet. During storms, waves rise two, three, and even four, feet high. There is always a gently undulating motion of the water. During a fresh gale the waves beat against the shore with almost as much noise and force as on the Atlantic coast. The lake is well stocked with fish. Trout may be caught by trolling. Since the completion of the railroad, only thirteen miles of staging are required to reach Lake Tahoe. Hotels have been built on all sides of the lake, and it must sometime become a great pleasure-resort.